

**Mayor's column for  
The Enterprise & The Beacon  
For publication on 10/21 and 10/22/09**

There has been much conversation about an application delivered to the City Planning Department on July 17. A law firm representing the Edmonds Shopping Center Associates applied for a contract rezone for the property known as the Safeway or Antique Mall property near the Port of Edmonds. They paid the \$3,255 fee for application, and that started the clock ticking on our regulatory requirements regarding such applications.

The application is called Sunset Landing and is a mixed use, transit-oriented development consisting of two phases, North and South, according to the documents. It includes parking, commercial spaces, and open space. It also features a residential building 75 feet in height and another at 60 feet. The rezone request asks for a change to allow for buildings in excess of the height currently allowed.

By law the City must process such an application within identified timelines. We have 28 days to determine if the application is complete. We must determine what significance the project has under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). There are three threshold levels: Non-Significance, Mitigated Significance or Significant. If staff decides that the latter category is in effect, then a determination will be issued, and that decision can be appealed to the hearing examiner.

Staff continues according to law to check the application for compliance with code and comprehensive plans. If mitigation is called for, staff will make recommendations. A staff recommendation on the project will be made to the Planning Board. The board will hold at least one public hearing on the matter.

The Planning Board will take public comment and then make their recommendation to the City Council. The Council will then have the task of adopting the board's recommendation, remanding it back to the Planning Board for changes, or denying the request completely.

As a citizen or an interested party, you can comment on the application as often as you like until the Planning Board has finished with their public hearings. You can send letters, emails, or comments to city planning staff at City Hall. Once the Planning Board is finished, no new information can be taken in to the record. By commenting on the application before that time, you become a "party of record" and have standing to speak when the City Council holds its hearing on the matter. If you are not a "party of record" you may not speak in front of the Council during their closed record review hearing.

The hearing before the City Council is called a "Closed Record Review" because as the Council deliberates on the matter, they can only use the information that has been submitted and been included in the Planning board record. And that also means that if you are a party of record, when you speak to the Council, you can only reiterate what you have placed in the record and cannot add new information in front of the council.

As of today, no SEPA determination has been yet identified, no Planning Board hearing has been scheduled, and no closed record review has been scheduled for the City Council. We will place all matters for the public on the City website; public hearings will also be advertised in the papers and on Channel 21. Public reader boards on the property itself will also identify hearing dates.

The latest update on this application is an email from the architect stating that because they missed several public notification deadlines (by a day or two) they are going to withdraw this application and file again. While the actual withdrawal hasn't happened as of the deadline for this article, we are not actively working on the application that is in-house now.

The good news is that by that action, they are giving the public even more time to study their proposal and make public comment on it. Take advantage of the opportunity if you have an interest in this rezone application.